



# NEWS RELEASE

**Pueblo Chemical Depot**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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U. S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot  
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## **Mission Accomplished: Pueblo Chemical Depot completes safe mustard agent sampling operation**

**PUEBLO CHEMICAL DEPOT, Colo.**—Specially trained Army teams from Pueblo Chemical Depot and Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., joined forces to complete an operation July 29 that involved obtaining both vapor and liquid agent samples from mustard agent stored at the depot. In a two part operation, actual sampling was safely completed on July 16, followed by the two types of samples being properly packaged and successfully transported under Army escort to two U.S. laboratories for analysis.

"This was a superbly coordinated and cooperative effort between the state and the Army in support of continued safe storage of the chemical stockpile and its ultimate destruction," said Lt. Col. Rob Wittig, who commands the Pueblo Chemical Depot. "It also gave us an excellent real-world opportunity to test our procedures for command and control, emergency response, and oversight of chemical operations. We are all better prepared for the future because of this operation."

The vapor and liquid samples were taken from 11 containers known as Department of Transportation, or DOT, steel bottles, about 25 inches high and 7 inches in diameter. The bottles have been in storage at the depot since the mid 1980s, when they were used to support a U.S. Army-directed agent sampling program.

The vapor samples were transported to a San Antonio, Texas laboratory where they will be analyzed for mustard agent, as well as impurities and byproducts, as requested by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

The liquid agent samples, which totaled less than four liters (about 1.24 gallons), were transported to a West Jefferson, Ohio, laboratory where they will undergo testing in support of the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant's (PCAPP) laboratory systemization efforts.

Scott Susman, who serves as the acting site project manager for the destruction plant currently under construction at the depot, said the samples will ensure laboratory testing standards rely on the most current data available.

"The opportunity to perform these analyses will enhance our procedures and help us to maintain the highest levels of safety," Susman said.

Aberdeen Proving Ground teams supporting the operation included the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center's (ECBC) Chemical Biological Services Team and the U.S. Army 20th Support Command, CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosives) Analytical and Remediation Activity (CARA) Technical Escort Unit. The ECBC team performed the sample collection of agent from the bottles and completed the final packaging of the agent. The 20th Support Command escorted the samples to their final destinations.

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## Cutline

Technical escort crews move vapor samples of mustard agent on to a government aircraft Tuesday, July 26 at the Pueblo Memorial Airport for transport to a laboratory in San Antonio, Texas. Officials want to know if other compounds other than mustard agent may be present in the vapor. *U.S. Army photo*

*The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) with headquarters at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., stores the nation's aging chemical weapons and develops programs aimed at effectively treating and ultimately eliminating chemical warfare materiel. For more information about CMA and its programs, visit [www.cma.army.mil](http://www.cma.army.mil).*